

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, March 30, 1892, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. March 30th, 1892.

My dear Alec:

I am afraid I haven't written you for some time, but then I haven't had any letters to answer for a very long time, and I have been very tired. Elsie had a slight relapse the very day I cabled you, she was convalescent, not a bad one at all, but it made me very nervous. Elsie felt quite ill that night for the first time since her illness and she seemed feverish and said her throat hurt, so altogether things looked disagreeable. Next day she was better again, and she has been gaining since, but very every slowly. The doctor said the trouble probably was because the diphtheria had gone into the nose where it was extremely difficult to dislodge it, and that it spread thence to the throat again. Elsie uses a tremendous number of handkerchiefs, and the chief approach to real discomfort lies in the feeling of stoppage of the nose. But she has absolutely no real discomfort or is she has she is most wonderfully heroic in concealing all appearance of it. She was to have got up Wednesday, now I hope she may get up that time next week, but she has not expressed the least regret at her lengthened stay abed, she has never said she wished to get up to see the parlor or to go out, she has not lost strength in the least as I know to my cost when she grips my hand so that the rings cut, and as I see when she gets out of bed for a few minutes. Not being actively anxious about Elsie I have time to feel dreadfully provoked at this long detention. No — after all I can't feel so. I do feel thankful that things are no worse. They might be so infinitely worse, and what should I do if we were so far from you and 2 Elsie dangerously ill, as Daisy was.

I have sent for Daisy to come back to Florence. Not here, but I have engaged a room for her and Miss Clark at a pension not far from here, exactly opposite the synagogue in fact.

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I could not bear to have her away from me any longer, and the doctor says it is all right to go out driving with her as of course I change my dress. Daisy is in Siena now, she went there from Leghorn on Tuesday. She had a good time in Leghorn as Miss Clark has many friends there and Daisy saw a great deal of a life that must be very different from ours.

Miss Clark won't come I am afraid, she spoke on the spur of the moment when she made the half offer I told you of, and now she is afraid she cannot afford to go and leave her sister and the pension to take care of themselves. I have asked her to name the price at which it would pay her to go, and give me the option of declining. What I have seen of her since Elsie's illness makes me very anxious to secure her if possible.

Mrs. Childs has been just as kind and helpful as possible, and Mrs. Burton sends flowers every other day. Mr. Childs made all the inquiries about my journey to Paris so I know just how to go. I have engaged my passage on the Werra April 20th, we shall have the same cabin we had coming. I found all the other smaller rooms were already taken, so I did not dare to put off paying the deposit any longer. The doctor thinks we can go, but is very non-committal. I am tired and homesick and wish you were with me, and I am troubled about you too. Miss True said nothing about your fingers, so I concluded that they were all right, but Mr. Hits writing at a later 3 date says they aren't and wishes you would see the doctor. I wonder whether Dr. Putnam really examined you or whether he accepted your assurance that you are well. This is not a very cheerful letter and I am ashamed that it should not be. No one has more to be thankful for than I, today has been sunshiney though with a high wind, and I bought some little mosaic pins for Mrs. Martin and Mrs. McInnis, Johnny Dan and Johnny McDermid. I think they will be pleased at being remembered so far away don't you. I wish you would answer my cable about Mr. McCurdy, you haven't even had time to cable.

I wonder why you settled on Lake George again. It seems hardly fair to ask the Western members to come so far East, especially when there is to be another conference in

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Maniton. I hope you have really got your work for the Association well underweigh so that you will not have so much to do when the hot weather comes on.

Geneova has just brought me in my tea, Miss Clark insists on my having some every evening and will not charge for it.

Did I tell you that Bob McCurdy and his wife called, but did not venture up on hearing about Elsie. They sent some flowers, and as they were only here a couple of days could do no more. Mr. Wilkinson of California called the other day. He came in and made quite a long call, but I am sure he was very nervous all the time and he was very prompt in declining my offer to call on his wife's daughter. He wanted you to know that he had written you and that he arrived in Rome a few days after we left.

Dr. Baldwin has a baby girl born this morning, it is his first after four sons, and he is very much pleased, he says he does not venture in his wife's room in consequence of his attendance on 4 Elsie. I shall have to send her something, and my money is going very fast. The doctor comes twice a day.

Goodnight my dear, Lovingly always, Yours, Thank Mr. Hitz for his letter and offer to escort me about Germany and Switserland, but my one idea is to get home as soon as may be.